



THE TOWN OF DURHAM, NH

BUSINESS MANAGER RECRUITMENT

Invitation to Qualified Candidates

The Town of Durham, New Hampshire (15,270 pop.), a university community in the heart of the NH Seacoast, is seeking an experienced municipal finance leader to serve as its next Business Manager. The Business Manager is a key member of the Administrator's leadership team and works closely with elected officials and department heads to carry out the Town's policy and financial objectives. Durham is in New Hampshire's seacoast region, one of the most beautiful, desired locations in the state and is home to the University of New Hampshire with an enrollment of 13,750 students. Durham is located just one hour north of Boston, MA and one hour south of Portland, ME. This is a high-impact executive position guiding the Town's financial strategy, personnel systems, and key administrative functions within a stable, collaborative management team, following the planned retirement of our longtime Business Manager in October 2026. The Town is seeking a highly ethical, honest, and talented professional who is deeply committed to public service and stewardship of public resources.

Operating under a Town Charter with a Council-Manager form of government, the Business Manager reports directly to the Town Administrator. The Business Manager leads the planning, management, and control of the Town's fiscal activities, overseeing a 2026 aggregate budget of just over \$39M, as well as key aspects of personnel and welfare administration. The position serves as the Town's chief financial and business management resource, advising the Administrator and Town Council on financial trends, risks, and strategic courses of action. The Business Manager provides administrative supervision for Business Office staff and works closely with all departments to ensure accurate, transparent, and compliant financial operations. Durham is not a large organization with multiple layers of financial staff; the Business Office is lean, and the Business Manager is expected to be both a strategic partner and a hands-on technical expert fully capable of performing the department's day-to-day financial and accounting functions. The successful candidate will benefit from a thoughtful transition period as the current Business Manager completes many years of service. The ideal candidate is an experienced public sector finance professional who combines strong technical expertise in governmental accounting and budgeting with a collaborative leadership style, political and organizational acumen, and a deep commitment to ethical public service. This position is well suited to a hands-on finance leader who is comfortable functioning as both a working manager and a subject-matter expert in a lean, high-performing organization.

Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, Accounting or closely related field required, master's degree preferred; at least five (5) years of progressively responsible experience in financial and/or business management. Municipal or public sector finance is strongly preferred. Any combination of education and experience that demonstrates possession of required knowledge, skills and ability will be considered.

Salary range to \$154,207; starting salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Exceptional candidates may be considered above this range. The Town offers a comprehensive benefits package including health, dental, life, and disability insurance; paid leave; and participation in the NH Retirement System.

For further information including a full job description, potential candidates are directed to the Municipal Resources, Inc. website at www.mrigov.com/career or to contact Alan Gould, President, Municipal Resources, Inc. at 603-279-0352 ext. 320.

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To apply submit a resume and cover letter, in confidence, as a single PDF attachment to recruitment@mrigov.com by **8 AM EST on Monday, May 4th, 2026** to be included in the first review of applicants. Resumes will continue to be accepted until the position is filled. Candidates are encouraged to apply early for full consideration. The Town of Durham is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Durham has a rich cultural history as a small New England town located on Great Bay, with a past that includes shipbuilding and early industrial mill enterprises as well as the establishment of the University of New Hampshire. The town also has deep agricultural roots and a tradition of natural resource protection.

Today, Durham still has many small-town characteristics, and residents benefit from a town that has strong community bonds, excellent schools, an accessible downtown, and a wide variety of cultural, environmental,



and recreational opportunities. Durham citizens recognize that while the community has small town characteristics, it is also home to the region's largest employer – the University of New Hampshire (UNH). The University is an aspect of Durham that makes the community unique, setting it apart from other municipalities on the Seacoast and in New Hampshire.

UNH offers benefits and resources that other communities strive for and contributes significantly to Durham's economy and character. Yet despite all of

the benefits, Durham understands that a large institution of this type poses unique challenges to the town.

Over the past decade, Durham has experienced a period of significant transformation. The Town has actively pursued development to bring new energy to the downtown, enhancing its appeal for both residents and UNH students, while also broadening the tax base to help stabilize property taxes. At the same time, the lingering effects of the pandemic, the expansion of remote work, and declining UNH enrollment have placed additional strain on the downtown. These development efforts and challenges are closely tied to Durham's unique relationship with the University of New Hampshire.

In recent years, Durham has also seen dramatic changes in and beyond the downtown area as a result of substantial private student housing development. The number and scale of some of these new buildings have affected perceptions of Durham as a small-town community, and residents have voiced concern about the concentration of students living in these complexes.

The local tax burden continues to be a concern for residents. Taxes remain high due to the costs of supporting the school district and maintaining high-quality public works, police, fire, school, and other municipal services. Economic growth is further limited by the small amount of land available for development, shaped by Durham's natural landscape, existing built environment, local conservation efforts, University-owned properties, current-use designations, and restrictive land use regulations that can make development challenging. Addressing these



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constraints requires a balanced approach that combines smart economic development, sound fiscal policies, and continued collaboration with UNH to encourage public-private initiatives and foster a community that remains affordable and diverse.

Vision for the Future

While most residents recognize that Durham is no longer the small town it once was, they would like it to retain the aspects of small town life, including an engaged community, a friendly, vibrant downtown for people of all ages, and a natural environment that isn't overshadowed by the built environment.

Additional characteristics of the community include:

Natural Beauty – Durham is home to beautiful forests, open spaces, and waterfront shorelines, wetlands, and other natural amenities thanks in large part to a long tradition of preserving its natural resources. Residents have noted scenic views along the Oyster and Lamprey Rivers, College Woods, Mill Pond, Adams Point, Wagon Hill and more.



Recreation – Residents generally agree that a broad range of outdoor and indoor recreational activities can be found throughout the town, and they play an essential role in making Durham a vibrant community. The town has made a conscious effort to increase residents' sense of belonging and appreciation of the natural environment by encouraging them to participate in a variety of healthy, fun activities on town lands. The Durham Parks and Recreation Department and Land Stewardship Subcommittee recommend outdoor activities including bird watching, boating, cross country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, horseback riding, ice skating, pond hockey, and hiking. Durham has an extensive network of public trails, which showcase the community's commitment to natural resource protection and diverse wildlife habitats. There are also a number of major local events including the Memorial Day ceremony, Durham Day, Downtown Trick-or-Treating, the Egg Hunt, the annual Frost Fest, and others that help to strengthen community bonds and connections.

Strong School System – Durham has a well-earned reputation as a community that provides high-quality educational opportunities for students. The Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD), which serves the communities of Durham, Lee, and Madbury, is recognized for its strong academic standards and commitment to fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment. The District has a long tradition of adopting innovative teaching practices and promoting a lifelong love of learning among its students.



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Cultural, Agricultural, and Historic Resources – The construction of the Town of Durham Public Library exemplifies the community’s strong commitment to preserving its cultural resources. The library serves as far more than a place to borrow books and periodicals; it has become a vibrant community gathering space that hosts book discussions, poetry readings, arts and crafts sessions, family movie nights, CPR courses, cooking demonstrations, and other programs.

Durham residents have also demonstrated continued support for protecting farmland and forestland, reflecting the high value placed on the town’s natural landscapes and heritage. The community enjoys access to the gardens at Wagon Hill Farm, a 139-acre property acquired by the Town in 1989, as well as to local farms, farm stands, and a seasonal Farmers’ Market. Durham’s rich history is reflected in its many historic sites, structures, events, and notable figures. Four Durham properties are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places by the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources: The General Sullivan House, the Wiswall Falls Mills Site, Thompson Hall, and the Durham Historic District.

University Town – Many qualities contribute to making a great university town. In Durham, the close connection between the downtown center and the University of New Hampshire fosters a lively mix of students and full-time residents. During the academic year, the downtown area is filled with people from all walks of life, creating a dynamic social and cultural setting. The proximity of the campus ensures that the lives of University members and Durham residents remain closely intertwined. The Town benefits greatly from the intellectual, cultural, and economic vitality that comes with being a college community while also recognizing the challenges that arise from its deeply interdependent relationship with the University.

